

**Washington State Court Improvement Program
2014 Annual Self-Assessment Report**

Provide a concise description of work completed or underway in FY 2014 (October 2013-September 2014) in the below topical subcategories. Include the purpose of the project or activity, the stage of work the project is in, and how the project or activity will contribute to continuous quality improvement (CQI) in the identified area

1. Identify and briefly describe data projects and activities in the following areas.

Clearly categorize the stage of work each project is in: planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment, implementing changes.

a. Use of AFCCARs or SACWIS data

AFCCARs national, state and county breakouts for stability and re-entry is received from Children's Administration (CA) annually. This data is included in the county breakout sections of our annual [Dependency Timeliness Report](#) (DTR), as well as in the Interactive Dependency Timeliness Report (IDTR) described below in the Data Dashboards section. IMPLEMENTATION

b. Agency Data sharing projects or efforts

A memorandum of understanding is in place between Administrative Office of the Courts and Children's Administration to extract the needed child welfare data from FAMLINK to:

- Produce the DTR, IDTR, and case processing data sets. Processed/merged CA/Court data is exchanged with Department of Social and Health Services/Research and Data Analysis Division (DSHS/RDA).
- Produce technical reports related to process to outcomes, as well as, with Chapin Hall to support the national Quality Improvement Center (QIC) Child Representation Project.
- Identify all court-referred youth who had experienced varying levels of contact with the child welfare system. This data sharing agreement was applied to historical data and was used to evaluate aggregate state-wide data and was not utilized to identify individual youth with CA involvement. IMPLEMENTATION

c. Data dashboards

- The IDTR offers interactive dashboards for all dependency process indicators, as well as other useful information related to case processing and legislative requirements. The IDTR is updated monthly and quarterly. IMPLEMENTING CHANGES
- We are in the planning stage of releasing multi-system youth data dashboards at the county-level. These brief reports will help individual

courts identify their population of youth who have involvement in the child welfare system and have also been referred to juvenile court on offender matters. Data dashboards will also include multi-system youth with status offenses such as truancy, At-Risk Youth, and Child in Need of Services. PLANNING

d. Fostering Court Improvement data projects

e. Education and Health Data Sharing

A data sharing agreement will soon be implemented that allows for matching of education data to court data. This will allow for a more broad range of outcome analyses. It is anticipated that early childhood education data will be included in the soon-to-be finalized data sharing agreement with education. Although there may be limitations with this data based upon the years that are included in the data, this is an initial step towards the inclusion of early childhood development in court outcome analysis. PLANNING

The Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR) is a member of a research group that meets on a monthly basis at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). The Graduation a Team Effort (GATE) committee is currently working on improved collaborative data sharing, with the intent of improved outcome analyses, as well as real-time data sharing across education/health/court systems for youth who are currently, or are at risk of becoming, court involved. Representatives from research groups at OSPI, AOC, and DSHS regularly participate on the GATE committee. PLANNING

f. Case management Systems

Washington is in the beginning of the pilot stage for the new Odyssey Case Management System and is participating in the CIP Odyssey User Group. This group discusses challenges with the new system and possible solutions and ideas for reporting out key dependency performance measures. PLANNING

g. Reports

Courts are expected to meet statutory guidelines for case processing for dependent children. Although the rates of compliance with process guidelines have, on average, improved, the question of whether and how process relates to permanency outcomes, such as the duration of a child's dependency status, has not been systematically examined. To address this question, WSCCR in partnership with CA and DSHS/RDA performed a multi-year study of the relationship between process measures and outcomes. Some of the key findings are:

- Dependency cases in compliance with statutory guidelines had significantly shorter durations.
- Significant difference exist in the duration of dependency cases across courts.
- Racial and ethnic disparities in dependency length exist in nearly all courts for cases longer than one year.

A summary of the report was provided in the [2013 DTR](#), and a new condensed brief was recently produced, [Dependency Court Processes and Outcomes for Children in Out of Home Care](#). The full technical report is available [here](#).

Future research in this area will include improvement in data linking between CA and AOC data systems. An event history dataset will be used to more accurately determine the relative magnitudes and possibly the causal relationships between particular court and CA actions and stages of a dependency case and its eventual outcomes. This new dataset will also be able to take advantage of ongoing improvements in the documenting of court docket activities and reasons for continuances. Recent implementation of specific service authorization and payments codes for a variety of evidence based practices in FAMLINK will allow a targeted evaluation of the utilization and effectiveness of services and interplay between services and court processes in determine the outcomes of dependency cases. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

During FY14 the initial multi-system youth report was published. [Prevalence and Characteristics of Multi-System Youth in Washington State](#) was made possible through the data sharing agreement with CA/DSHS. The report highlights prevalence and demographic information for multi-system youth in the State of Washington. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

- h. Other
2. **Identify and briefly describe projects or activities intended to examine or improve hearing quality. Clearly categorize the stage of work each project is in: planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment, implementing changes.**
 - a. Court observation
 - b. Process Improvements
 - c. Specialty/Pilot Courts
 - d. Court orders/IV-E judicial determinations
 - e. Mediation

Mediation in dependency cases is a topic of increasing interest in Washington State. The more robust mediation programs are in King and Pierce counties, focusing on the time between the shelter care hearing and the fact finding hearing. According to research conducted by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) the King County program has achieved significant outcomes in the first five years of operation including timelier case processing, increased resolution rates, increased placement with relatives compared to foster care, and higher rates of reunification with parents. Other counties also use various forms of mediation and alternative dispute resolution strategies.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

- f. Appeals**
- g. Data reports**
- h. Other**

The University of Washington Law School Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA) developed the judicial education track at 2014 Children's Justice Conference with the following sessions: judging dependency in rural counties, practicing dependency law in rural counties, tips for lawyers on working with non-English speaking clients, how to use data to improve your dependency court, civility and ethical roles in the dependency process, and decision making in dependency court. CIP funds were used for judicial officers and other court partners to attend the conference. CITA also held a dinner gathering for judicial officers and court staff from around the state to look over various measures of their courts. Judges participated in structured discussions about the value of measurement and discussed priorities and goals from the CIP strategic plan. CITA will use feedback from this and other trainings and input from the CIP Steering Committee to develop the judicial education track for the 2015 conference. IMPLEMENTING CHANGES

3. Identify and briefly describe projects intended to improve timeliness of hearings and/or permanency outcomes. Clearly categorize the stage of work each project is in: planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment, implementing changes.

a. Timeliness (general/ASFA timelines)

CITA supports Tables of Ten in several counties statewide to reach solutions that impact and improve outcomes for families, as well as training stakeholders on the new solutions. Virtually all of the Tables of Ten have used the program to improve case resolution times and as a base to encourage and develop broad cross-disciplinary training initiatives focused on improving the local child welfare legal system by enhancing skill development, broadening the knowledge base of

individuals, and focusing on systemic reform at the operational level. CITA uses the CQI process as it implements Tables of Ten throughout the state.

IMPLEMENTATION

CQI procedures are also used in the Child and Family Service Review Program Improvement Plan (CFSR PIP). Data analysis was used to pinpoint areas that needed focus, rather than spend time and money on a broad-sweeping statewide approach to training. The CIP data researcher, CITA and court staff were able to more easily identify issues and take corrective action to improve the timeliness measures. Focus on the courts with the higher rates of non-compliance has decreased the percentage of non-compliance for those counties, which in turn affected the statewide numbers. CITA has continued to work with the six counties seeking to reduce non-compliance rates for timely filing of termination of parental rights petition / exceptional cause findings. During fiscal year 2014, five of the six counties have reduced their non-compliance rate from the beginning of the project. The Statewide rate of non-compliance in 2014 is 15%, compared to 21% at the beginning of the project. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

b. Timeliness (continuances)

IDTR data dashboard referenced in 1c.

c. Timeliness (appeals)

d. Permanency Goals other than APPLA

After reviewing statewide dependency performance data, the CIP Steering Committee identified permanency as an area of focus for change, specifically:

- Achieve permanency before a child has spent 15 months in out-of-home care.
- Complete adoptions within six months following entry of termination of parental rights.

CITA and AOC are working to identify data components at issue and engage counties with low percentage of children achieving permanency to work with local partners on solutions using the collaborating purpose-to-practice process. The goal is to increase the percentage of children who achieve permanency within 15 months in focus counties, which should in turn improve statewide numbers. This same process will be used for focusing on the adoption objective.

CITA hosted a two-day Judging in Dependency training on June 5-6, 2014. The curriculum was based on the three-part direction from the CIP Steering Committee: Improving numbers on PIP compliance, improving rate of adoptions completed within 6 months of termination of parental rights, and improving the rate of permanency within 15 months of out-of-home care. Judicial officers were taken through the review process in a way that highlighted the effect of good

work early in the case to set up potential success on these two measure later in the case. CITA hosts these dependency trainings for judicial officers twice annually using CQI to determine the focus of each training curriculum. PLANNING

e. APPLA and older youth

In 2011 legislation was enacted establishing the Extended Foster Care program in Washington for youths ages 19-21 who were participating in or completing a secondary education program. Each year the Legislature has expanded eligibility to include youths who are enrolled or have applied for postsecondary academic or vocational programs; and participation in programs designed to promote employment or to remove barriers to employment. In 2014 legislation was enacted to expand eligibility to include youth who engage in employment for 80 hours or more per month. The IDTR discussed above in section 1.c. provides a dashboard report regarding youth in extended foster care. IMPLEMENTATION

f. Data reports

Dependency timeliness report referenced above in section 1.a.

g. Other

4. Identify and briefly describe projects or activities intended to examine or improve the quality of legal representation. Clearly categorize the stage of work each project is in: planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment, implementing changes.

a. Training and resource development

CITA is providing training to a select group of children’s attorneys for the National Quality Improvement Center (QIC) Legal Representation for Children in Foster Care Program Evaluation project. Washington State is one of two sites that is participating in a randomized controlled design to test whether implementation of the QIC Child Representation Best Practice model will improve child representation over its current practice. IMPLEMENTATION

CITA is also working with the Office of Public Defense and the Office of Civil and Legal Defense on the projects listed below in 4.c. WSCCR is reworking the interactive data dashboard described in section 1.c. in order to assist CITA and OCLA with implementation of the new legislation regarding child representation.

b. Assessment/Analyzing practices

c. New Practice models/pilots

• Children’s Representation Program

Legislation passed in the 2014 session requires the appointment of an attorney to represent a child in a dependency proceeding six months after granting a petition to terminate the parent and child relationship when there is no remaining parent with parental rights. The law requires the state to pay the

costs of legal services as long as counsel meet certain standards. Courts may appoint attorneys for children at any time in a dependency action on its own initiative or upon the request of a parent, child, guardian ad litem, caregiver, or the Department of Social and Health Services. The Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) is responsible for implementation and administration of the program, including verifying attorneys are providing representation in accordance with the standards of practice and training recommended in the [*Meaningful Legal Representation for Children and Youth in Washington's Child Welfare System*](#), written by the Statewide Children's Representation Workgroup of the Washington Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care. Since the implementation of this law, July 1, 2014, OCLA has established a Children's Representation Advisory Group of judges, attorneys general, juvenile court administrators, Office of Public Defense, and children's advocates. OCLA has identified children who require attorneys under the new law, contracted with counties for cost of reimbursement, identified 150 attorneys statewide to take the cases, contracted with University of Washington Law School Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA) to provide training, developed a case activity reporting and oversight system, and began conducting oversight of child representation program attorneys.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Parent's Representation Program

The Washington State Office of Public Defense (OPD) Parent Representation program (PRP) provides state-funded attorney representation and case support services to indigent parents, custodians, and legal guardians involved in child dependency and termination of parental rights proceedings. Key elements of the PRP include; the implementation of case load limits and professional attorney standards; access to expert services and independent social workers, OPD oversight; and ongoing training and support. The program operates in 31 of Washington's 39 counties. In a recent evaluation of the program, the PRP's enhanced legal representation was shown to reduce the days to establishing permanency for children in foster care by speeding up reunification with parents, or where reunification was not possible, by speeding up permanency through guardianship or adoption. The program began in 2000 after the legislature directed OPD to implement a pilot program providing enhanced legal representation in the Pierce and Benton/Franklin juvenile courts. The pilot program addressed parent attorneys' resource inequities, including a lack of practice standards; little or no investigative or expert resources; inadequate compensation; and high caseloads. In 2005 the PRP began expanding to other Washington counties. The PRP is currently operating in approximately 85% of Washington State. Since its inception; the

PRP has been evaluated numerous times showing positive results. In 2014, the Legislature appropriated funding for the OPD and the Attorney General's Office (AGO) to provide additional legal services on a temporary basis to help resolve a backlog of termination of parental rights cases with the goal of achieving permanency for these children. In an effort to ensure effective processing of these cases and to reduce the backlog, the OPD and the AGO worked together to make the option of voluntary settlement conferences available to parties in the juvenile courts where the backlog was likely to have the greatest impact. The OPD and the AGO shared equally in the costs for retired judicial officers' time to preside over these settlement conferences. Further information on the program is available at www.opd.wa.gov.

IMPLEMENTING CHANGES

- d. **Law School Clinics**
 - e. **Data reports**
 - f. **Other**
- 5. Identify and briefly describe projects or activities intended to examine or improve notice, engagement, and participation of parties in court proceedings. Clearly categorize the stage of work each project is in: planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment, implementing changes.**
- a. **Youth engagement**
 - b. **Parent engagement**
 - The Parent for Parent (P4P) program is a peer outreach and education program provided by parents who are veterans of the child welfare system to parents who have recently become engaged with the dependency system. The purpose of the program is to engage families earlier in services and reduce resistance to the court process. Beginning in 2005, Court Improvement Program funds have supported the start-up of each of the seven programs, and a contract is in place to add two more counties. Continuous Quality Improvement techniques have been used to expand the program from its initial pilot project in Pierce County to King County which includes a more robust program evaluated by the National Center for Juvenile and Family Court Judges. *A Parents for Parents Program Start-Up Guide* was created by Catalyst for Kids, which aids in the development of a program customized for the particular needs of the area being served. Parents for Parents provides the framework and infrastructure for parent advocacy work and develops the capacity of veteran parent leadership. While this program has been identified as a

promising practice, the next step is to work towards becoming an evidence based program. Recently, due to severe budget cuts, Children's Administration cut funds to programs that were not evidence based, including Parents for Parents. We will be requesting technical assistance to work towards this designation in order to assist funding continuity of this important program. IMPLEMENTATION/EVALUATION

- Establishing Biological Paternity Early Project is in the beginning stages of implementation. The purpose of the project is to significantly reduce the time to determine paternity in dependency and termination cases. The four pilot courts will provide low-cost, easily accessible and rapid DNA testing to alleged fathers in dependency and termination case. The pilot is for one year and courts will provide a report including: comparison of average time between the request for a DNA test and the results using cases prior to the pilot project and during the project to show whether there was reduction in time for testing; any cost savings to the court, Children's Administration, and other court partners; and other results such as increased placement with paternal relatives, increase participation by fathers in court hearings, and earlier visitation with fathers.

IMPLEMENTATION

- c. **Foster family engagement**
 - d. **Caregiver engagement (grandparents, extended family, fictive kin)**
 - e. **Notice to relatives**
 - f. **Limited English proficiency**
 - g. **Data reports**
 - h. **Other**
6. **Identify and briefly describe projects or activities intended to examine or improve child well-being outcomes. Clearly categorize the stage of work each project is in: planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment, implementing changes.**

a. Education (general)

An education representative position was created on the CIP Steering Committee. CIP is working with partners at Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Children's Administration. The education chapter of the Washington State Juvenile Nonoffender Benchbook was updated in 2014. The revised chapter gives guidance to juvenile and family court judges for school placement decisions. In addition, to further assist judges, and to ensure they are considering all factors when ruling on change in placement, the Dependent Child's Education Judicial checklist was updated. The first section of the checklist is devoted to determine

what efforts have been made to place the student in a school, based on the best interest of the child. The checklist also includes questions about the child's progress and post-secondary preparation. IMPLEMENTATING CHANGES

Understanding that students do better with less disruption of their education, including a reduction in the time out of school, enrollment outcomes for youth in foster care were examined. Of the youth in foster care with a placement or placement move within the 2012-2013, 64 percent did not change schools. Data shows that efforts to expedite transfer of records for children and youth in care can reduce delays in enrollment. According to data, it takes fewer days to enroll a student, compared to two years ago. For more information on efforts to improve educational outcomes for youth in foster care, visit this OSPI website:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/FosterCare/default.aspx> PLANNING

Data-share agreements have significantly improved the delivery of school records due to online availability. The need has been recognized for developing a shared data system among all three agencies including an effective/efficient information delivery system. IMPLEMENTATION/PLANNING

Staff from WSCCR and the CIP Director participate in a multi-system youth committee that meets at the Center for Children and Youth Justice in Seattle. This committee has brought together various stakeholders who have worked to support information sharing across systems (including Children's Administration, education, and the courts) and improve awareness of multi-system efforts and programs across the state of Washington. The activities of this group aim to improve youth outcomes through the support of policy and programs that are designed to benefit vulnerable court-involved youth.

PLANNING/IMPLEMENTATION (in some areas)

b. Early childhood development

- Three counties have recently implemented infant-toddler court teams for dependency cases.

Pierce County sponsors the Best for Babies Pilot Project. The goal is to front-load services to infants (0-3) and their parents, in accordance with current best practices, to preserve the infant-parent bond, promote child well-being, and reduce time to permanence. The advisory team consists of community stakeholders from the fields of medicine, mental health, social work, nutrition, education, law, etc. The team meets twice monthly with parents, foster parents, social workers and CASAs. The team offers input, feedback, and suggestions to enhance the infant/parent relationship and

development; and provides information, support and encouragement to parents and caregivers. IMPLEMENTATION

Grays Harbor County sponsors a baby team similar to the program described above. However, one difference is the baby is assigned one supervisor, who also transports, which helps with transitions. The baby team meetings are facilitated by the same person twice per month. IMPLEMENTATION

King County sponsors Supporting Early Connections to help babies and parents in dependency court. Child-Parent therapy is provided by Navos and paid for by Medicaid. The therapist works closely with parents to help them develop the confidence and skills to care for and bond with their children, by attending weekly sessions for approximately one year. They also help the client connect to resources such as housing, food, diapers, and assistance navigating government agencies. To be eligible for the program the child must be between 4 and 36 months old. During the year of therapy, three reports about family goals and progress are provided to the attorney, social worker and judge for the dependency case. The program is currently at capacity, with no open spaces available at this time. IMPLEMENTATION

King County also developed an Early Learning Searchable database to provide information on available services to social workers, CASAs, and court staff for child welfare cases. The database includes home-based and community-based services that can be searched by zip code. The agencies update service availability monthly. IMPLEMENTATION

c. Psychotropic Medication

See section 6.j., below.

d. LGBTQ youth

e. Trauma

- CITA is beginning work with several counties who are interested in a collaborative effort with courts in Portland, Oregon, to develop and implement the concept of a trauma informed dependency court.

PLANNING

- King County Model Courts requested a review by NCJFCJ of their juvenile court system to assist in efforts to create trauma-responsive environments, practices, and policies. The report described that the court had clearly made efforts to provide a respectful, friendly, supportive

environment that does not increase the level of trauma or stress of those they serve. Several recommendations were provided as potential changes to help the court be more sensitive to the challenges trauma-exposed and trauma-reactive children and parents face. The King County Model Court team will take the recommendations into consideration as they plan next steps. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

f. Racial disproportionality

Racial disproportionality was an area of focus in the multi-system youth report that was published in 2014, and has continued to be a primary area of interest for the multi-system youth truancy studies (see section 6.i, below). Initial findings have been published and the study of racial disproportionality remains an ongoing research priority. PLANNING/IMPLEMENTATION

g. Immigration/Unaccompanied Minors/ Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

The Attorney General's Office hosted a meeting regarding the increasing number of unaccompanied minors crossing the borders. A couple of non-profit organizations are training pro bono attorneys to represent unaccompanied minors and file petitions in state courts for non-parental custody, adoption and dependency. A representative from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will be presenting on this topic at the 2015 Spring Conference of the Washington State Superior Court Judges Association. Also, see section 6.j., below for other efforts regarding immigration issues for foster youth. PLANNING

h. Training and resources

i. Data reports

An initial prevalence report on multi-system youth was published in 2014: [*Prevalence and Characteristics of Multi-System Youth in Washington State*](#). Additional data has been shared through presentations at court committee meetings and conferences. Additional data reports are in the evaluation/assessment phase and will soon be publicly available.

Court truancy data has been shared and presented at various court committee meetings. Data evaluation included cross-system analysis of youth with both children's administration involvement and truancy petitions filed in juvenile court. The intent of this analysis is to identify populations of youth who may be at higher risk for truancy. IMPLEMENTATION

j. Other

CIP provides ongoing funding and support to the Mockingbird Society to sponsor the annual [*Foster Youth and Alumni Leadership Summit*](#). Youth from across the state proposed the following reforms:

- Expand extended foster care

- Overmedication
- Implement more specialized pre-licensure training for foster parents
- Involve foster youth in foster parent training
- Change how foster youth are placed into group homes
- Help undocumented youth in care to receive legal status

Policymakers, advocates and community members worked alongside youth throughout the year to address the proposed reforms. The proposals were presented by the youth at the summit to the Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care, legislators and other stakeholders. These proposals initiate a year-round effort to bring positive changes that will benefit those currently in foster care as well as those who have yet to enter the system.

IMPLEMENTING CHANGES

7. Identify and briefly describe projects or activities intended to examine or improve compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Clearly categorize the stage of work each project is in: planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment, implementing changes.

a. Training and resource development

- CIP worked with Children’s Administration, Casey Family Programs and University of Washington Alliance to plan a statewide Indian Child Welfare Summit to be held in October 2014. The CIP Director coordinated presenters for the legal track of breakout sessions which included: tribal/state court collaboration, legal processes and practices in tribal court ICW proceedings, qualified expert witnesses, best interest of the Indian child, child’s voice and ICWA, legal issues in permanency planning for Indian children, and representing parents in ICWA proceedings. PLANNING
- CITA is planning dependency training with a focus on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in December 2014 at the Port Madison Indian Reservation. Tribal court judges and state court judicial officers will be invited to attend. PLANNING
- CITA is also partnering with the Suquamish Nation and other entities to develop a one-day training focused on issues of significance to the Native American Community related to child welfare. This event is planned for February 2015. PLANNING

b. Data collection and analysis

King County Model Courts requested a review of ICWA compliance from the NCJFCJ to identify achievements and challenges associated with ICWA compliance and to make recommendations to improve court practice. The

assessment reported that overall the court is performing well. A few recommendations were provided for improving ICWA practices: making key findings on the record at each hearing, continuing to notify the tribes of subsequent hearings, and investigating the availability of Indian foster care homes. The King County Model Court team will take the recommendations under consideration as they plan next steps. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

c. State and Tribal court agreements

d. Tribal collaboration projects

The second meeting of the Tribal/State Court Consortium was held September 22, 2014, as part of the annual Judicial Conference. A presentation on ICWA was provided by a tribal judge and a court commissioner. The group decided to have regional meetings for tribal and state court judicial officers to work more closely to develop relationships and work on issues between their jurisdictions. The first regional meeting will be held February 2015, hosted by the Suquamish Tribe.

PLANNING

e. ICWA notice projects

f. Data reports

g. Other

8. Describe how the CIP will assist with and participate in round three of the CFSR and program improvement processes in an ongoing fashion (include concrete actions and responsibilities that have been identified, or ideas for how best to be involved).

The CIP Director was invited by Children's Administration (CA) and attended several informational meetings about the next round of CFSR, including the Children's Bureau Briefing for States. CIP will be active partners as CA continues to move forward with program improvement processes to improve outcomes for children and families in preparation for the CFSR and under the CFSP/APSR. The CIP team will actively participate in the review and analysis of data and development of strategies related to court activities that impact child safety, permanency and well-being, as well as improvements in the Case Review systemic factor. The CIP Steering Committee will be informed throughout the process.

9. Describe how the CIP will assist with and participate in the CFSP/APSR processes with the child welfare agency in an ongoing fashion (include concrete actions and responsibilities that have been identified, or ideas for how best to be involved).

CIP will continue to work with CA on communication and education, focused work in jurisdictions where areas for improvement have been identified, and helping to facilitate CA/court partner engagement. CA plans to develop a group that will oversee and

coordinate the work and then establish groups that will focus on specific areas. The CIP Director will be an ongoing participant in the oversight group. The CIP Steering Committee will be informed of the CFSP process and incorporate identified goals and activities into the CIP strategic plan as part of the CQI process.

10. Assess how the CIP is progressing with CQI overall?

The CQI process is used for CIP Steering Committee in developing the strategic plan. The committee met on March 3, 2014 and reviewed the history of CIP in Washington, the status of recent CIP projects, statewide dependency performance data, and the CIP budget outlook. The committee developed a mission statement and principles for making decisions. Using information gathered from these activities, the committee identified and prioritized target areas for change.

The CIP Director met with the committee co-chairs and the CIP data and training team to further develop the plan of action and budget based on input from the steering committee. This strategic plan is the guide by which the Washington State CIP allocates grant funding and other resources towards improving outcomes for children and families in the child welfare system.

The CQI process is also used by CITA as a regular component to plan trainings and for facilitating court team meetings. CITA is able to collaborate with WSCCR in making the data presented in the IDTR a tool for court improvement state-wide. The IDTR provides data for counties to use to manage, assess, and improve their court systems on a local level and allow CITA to more efficiently target federal training resources to maximize their effectiveness. This is the true CQI process of using data to provide education/training, which results in practice improvement.

a. Describe the largest challenges your CIP faces with implementing CQI into your work.

The largest challenge with implementing CQI is the same as most challenges in this line of work: time and money. While several courts have a Family and Juvenile Court Improvement Program coordinator that is able to use the IDTR to assist with CQI in their courts, many courts do not have the funding capacity to provide for staff to review data and follow through on specific projects and plans for improvement in their courts. It is also a challenge for CITA to reach out to all 39 counties in this state, due to capacity issues. This is why we use our data to help determine which areas need their focused expertise in facilitation and education.

b. Describe the types of capacity building technical assistance (tools, resources, training opportunities, direct assistance) that would be most helpful to support CQI efforts.

- Parent for Parent Program – Technical assistance is needed for the Parent for Parent program to go through the process of becoming an evidenced based program. Two of our county programs have had studies completed and the P4P program is considered a promising practice. Assistance is needed to take it to the next step in order to assist with funding sources for the current programs, expand the program into other counties, and share this program nationwide.
- Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) – Technical assistance may be needed to complete an assessment. What are other states doing? How do we know if we are doing a good job?